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South Boston Annex
Conceptual Re-Use Study
and Preliminary Development
Plan

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Conceptual Re-Use Study
and Preliminary Development
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Economic Development and
Industrial Commission

Office of the Mayor
City of Boston

May 3, 1973

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1.0 Introduction

The recent announcement by the Department of Defense regarding the closure of the Boston Naval Shipyard by Fall 1974 and the expected declaration of the Charlestown and South Boston Annex facilities and sites as surplus property offers the opportunity for re-use or development of these properties. It is thought imperative to proceed speedily with the establishment of a development plan as the desirability of these facilities may attract other offerors. Assuming that this scheduled action takes place, and that no other Federal Agency requires use of these properties, they will be offered concurrently to States, County and City Agencies. This provides a unique opportunity to meet vital city needs in:

- 1) Additional tax producing properties.
- 2) New employment opportunities.
- 3) Added revitalization of the economy of the city.
- 4) Maintenance of historic and architectural sites.
- 5) Development of recreational facilities.
- 6) Providing new housing.

The sites are strategically situated and must form an integral part of the general development plan for the city of Boston,

This report provides a preliminary re-use and conceptual development plan for the South Boston Annex and a discussion of the potentials of establishing a Mass Production Fishing Vessel Facility. It also comments on

potential establishment of a free trade Industrial zone and developments on Commonwealth and Fish Pier facilities.

2.0 General Description

2.1 Site

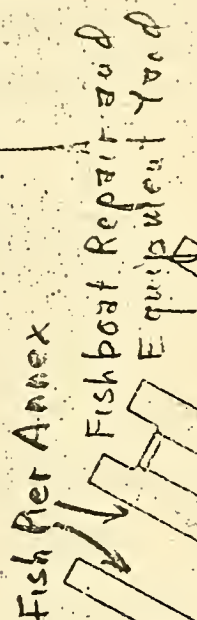
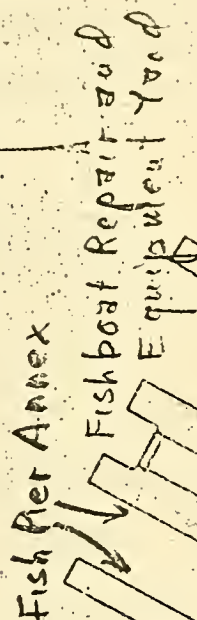
South Boston Annex consists of an area of about 174 acres acres of which 98 areas are solid land, 14 acres are piled and/or filled piers and 62 are water. Its boundaries are Dry Dock avenue in the south, Summer Street and Northern Avenue in the South West, the Penn-Central Railyard and Wharf Eight in the northwest and Boston Harbor in the north easterly direction. Most of the land area with the exception of the area between South-east - north and west wharf is solid land. The latter includes an appreciable amount of fill. There are a total of eight narrow finger piers (Numbers 1-7 and 10). These piers vary in width from about 32' (No. 10) and about 100' (No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7) to about 140' (No. 5 and 6). The last mentioned two piers enclose dry dock No. 4 between them.

2.2 Major Facilities

There are 22 buildings on the site as shown in Figure 1, with a total floor area of square feet. South Boston Annex also has two graving drydocks: No. 3 - 1176' 0" x 149' 0" x 42' 8"; No. 4 about 693' x 92' 0" x 42' 8".

In addition, there are two large buildings South of

1000
 900
 800
 700
 600
 500
 400
 300
 200
 100
 0



Fish Pet Anox

Fishboat Repair and
Equipment Yard

1405

Public Place

Fish Market

Marine Equipment
and Pleasure Boat
Marine Electric

1947
STORY
1947

~~Post Station~~

1875

Free Trade
Zone

Free Port Pier Figure 1

Dry Dock Avenue which the U.S. Army turned over to the U.S. Navy several years ago. These buildings provide an additional area of square feet. An area of square feet, south-west of Summer Street on the northern side of the extension of the Reserve Channel is also considered for a possible location of a free trade industrial zone.

The Headquarters of the First Naval District are located in the Fargo Building on Summer Street adjacent to the above mentioned area. No knowledge of the plans for disposition of this building is available.

2.3 Access

The main entrance to South Boston Annex is located on Summer Street and connects to a major and wide traffic artery. A second entrance is available on wharf eight as an angled extension of C Street leading into Northern Avenue. This is a wide artery which is also connected to an elevated causeway (Commonwealth Pier Causeway) by a ramp. (This causeway leads from Summer Street to Commonwealth Pier). Northern Avenue is a wide commercial artery connecting from Atlantic Avenue with Wharf Eight.

3.0 Re-Use Analysis and Development Rationale

3.1 Goals and Objectives

The potential uses of the South Boston Annex and related properties are considered with a view towards the following goals and objectives.

a) Increasing the Number of Jobs.

Boston has little land left for development of major employment facilities, particularly of industrial nature. A major segment of the unemployed or under employed are and will be workers with some experience in marine oriented industries. The South Boston Annex offers unique opportunities for the development and establishment of such industries.

b) Improving the Tax Base of the City of Boston

Large numbers of tax revenue producing properties, particularly near the waterfront of the city are vacant or empty. To assure an economic revitalization of the area and resulting effects on the city at large, a coordinated industrial and manufacturing base is required to supplement the excess in office and warehousing space available in the city. Furthermore, it appears, that a better integration of the economic activities of the city and the port is desirable. Such integration could be provided by a well planned marine oriented Industrial buffer zone.

c) Improving the Viability of the Port of Boston

The major revenues and jobs in port operations accrue from handling general (breakbulk, unitized or containerized) cargo.

Although containerized cargo movements have increased recently, the total amount of general cargo handled through the port has fallen consistently in recent years. A free trade industrial and port zone offers major advantages to export industries and shipping companies and is traditionally used for industrial assembly, manufacture or for transshipment. The nature of industry in the Greater Boston area, and the location and capability of the Port of Boston may offer attractive opportunities for the establishment of a viable free trade industrial zone and port. Electronic, control, component, container, instrument, marine equipment and similar industries many of which import materials (or components) for manufacture or assembly and who export a large proportion of their output may be attracted to such a development.

d) Improving the Viability of Boston Fishing Industry

Fishing and fish processing is a historically important industry in this area. Large scale obsolescence of fishing vessels and shore side facilities have greatly reduced the economic and operational viability of this industry. Effective facilities for

fishing vessel production and repair may offer unique incentives for the revitalization of this industry.

e) Development of Improved Recreational and Communication Opportunities

The South Boston Annex and adjacent areas provide an opportunity for development of an integrated recreational, passenger terminal (liners, ferries, etc) and enlarged fishing activity development. Integration of an extended Northern Avenue complex of restaurants, fish piers, shopping arcades, passenger terminals, fishing vessel repair (supply) facilities, and fish processing plants may provide a unique attraction. (San Francisco Fish Pier Development).

3.2 Constraints

At this time it is not known how, when, what and under what terms these properties will be transferred to a qualified agency. The experience with the transfer of the Brooklyn Navy Yard to CLICK (a county-city agency) indicates that the Department of Defense will consider transfer of the property to an agency offering a plan with highest potential utilization to the local economy in terms of jobs, revenue, etc. Furthermore, it is noted, that it has been standard practice for the U.S. Navy to remove all mobile, manufacturing and similar equipment and only

leave buildings, docks, rigid (or rail mounted) cranes, as well as inbedded distributed systems. The disposition of the Fargo Building and the buildings formerly belonging to the U.S. Army (on Dock Street) is not known. Both of these properties are presently occupied by the U.S. Navy (First Naval District Command) and the U.S. Army respectively and serve administrative functions. Similarly it is recognized, that the MPA has a request for transfer of former Army Base buildings in exchange for the MPA HOOSAC pier and is interested in acquiring the remaining (large 7 stories) former Army Base administrative and storage building.

Although the U.S. Navy may be willing to transfer the South Boston Annex property, it is possible that it may require guaranteed use access to the large (aircraft carrier size) drydock, as there are only four such docks available on the Atlantic coast. As Naval ships grow larger the remaining Navy docks are found insufficient.

3.3 Assumptions

For the purposes of this conceptual Re-Use study and Preliminary Development Plan, it is assumed that:

- a) Integrated development can be planned and implemented for the entire South Boston Annex, former Army Base(excl. properties currently used by MPA), and properties South-West of Sumner Street.
- b) Above named properties will be released and turned over to the selected agency on schedule (Before end of 1974).
- c) Title to above properties (or other transfer vehicle) does not restrict use, addition or modification with the sole proviso that the U.S. Navy may require retention of dock No. 3 in workable condition and at the potential disposal of the U.S. Navy on agreed upon terms.
- d) That otherwise transfer from the Federal Government is permanent and nonreversible under normal conditons.
(Times of emergency excluded)
- e) That Naval vessels, other mobile equipments, stores, supplies, and other federal property which does not form part of the real estate or is either essential or desirable for Re-Use activities is removed at the expense of the federal government.
- f) That the transfer of the property to the selected agency is made withou prejudice, specific or implied.

g) That terms regarding use of said property are general and include those authorized as the Re-Use plan or its alternatives.

h) That the primary objective is to improve the economic and social welfare of Boston where this objective includes jobs, housing, recreation, tax revenue, and aesthetics.

4.0 Framework for Development Plan of South Boston Annex

The conceptual development plan for the South Boston Annex was established on the premise that conversion to civilian use should:

- a) Require minimum time
- b) Require Minimum investment
- c) Maximize utilization of existing facilities and equipment
- d) Maximize job opportunities with particular reference to newly unemployed marine industrial labor
- e) Maximize economic benefits to the greater Boston area
- f) Maximize tax revenues to the city.

The proposed plan provides for an intensive use of the area by such activities as ship repair, boat building, marine equipment manufacture, pleasure craft production, light manufacture and assembly and office including exhibition spaces. The plan also includes the development of a Trade Center, free trade industrial zone and free port pier in adjacent areas. The general allocation of land is shown in Figure 2.

Consideration was given to the use of the facility and land for the establishment of:

a) A Refinery Complex

Although total area would be sufficient and the location desirable from a refineries viewpoint (distribution, water access, berthing, etc.), this alternative was dismissed for the following reasons:

- A refinery is unsightly
- It offers minimum employment per unit area and/or investment

- Air, water and thermal pollution is unacceptable in the center city even under the most stringent conditions of effluent control.
- Tax benefits to the city may be marginal
- It would develop perpetual pressure for expansion of storage facilities as refinery transport increases
- It would adversely effect adjacent property values
- It would be an ineffective use of existing facilities including the extensive waterfront
- It would eliminate use of the daydocks and other facilities by the U.S. Navy and others in times of emergency and otherwise.

b) Tanker Terminal

The proposition of establishment of a tanker terminal on the site was eliminated for the following reasons:

- Unacceptability of large tank forms on the site for aesthetic and air pollution control reasons
- Effect on property values
- Very limited job opportunities
- Low intensity use of land and facilities
- Marginal tax producing opportunity
- Incompatibility with alternate use, such as ship repair and manufacturing.

c) Power Station

The use of the area for the establishment of a major electric power station is attractive, although the effects are air and thermal pollution--may have to be investigated. The most attractive site for such a development would be the area north of the entrance to the large dock (marked "Ship Repair Expansion"). This site is remote from intensive use facilities, provides good air and water discharge disposition and introduces no interference with other activities. Although employment opportunities are margi-

nal, tax and power supply cost advantages may accrue to the city and the community. A direct delivery tanker terminal could form part of the complex. This location seems far enough from the landing path pattern of the airport to permit required heights of construction.

d) General Cargo Port and Warehousing Use

Proposals for the use of this site for an expansion of port and port related warehousing are dismissed for the following reasons:

- The port MPA and the city has more than sufficient berth and warehousing facilities to meet present and projected demand
- This low intensity use would not utilize majority of existing facilities.
- Employment opportunities are minimal
- Tax revenues would be marginal

e) Containter Terminal and Roll On - Roll Off Terminal

While the site is sufficiently large for a container terminal, only the North and West Wharfs provide effective marginal piers for container terminal use. The 26 acres of hinterland abutting these 800' and 1,100' long wharfs would provide an effective marshalling area.

The C Street-West wharf connection may then serve as a roll on - roll off terminal for ships and ferries. This alternative use would be attractive, if the demand, over and above that satisfied by existing Mystic (Schiavonne) and Castle Island terminals, could be established. Present projections are, that even under most optimistic assumptions, existing facilities could meet forecast demand through 1978.

If the MPA obtains use of the remainder of the Schiavonne property and more extensive utilization of the Castle Island terminal, demand will be met through 1984. Such use would, furthermore, introduce a large additional burden on inner city traffic arteries, reduce city tax revenues, offer marginal employment opportunities, and not utilize existing capital facilities effectively.

F) Extensive Recreational Use

Proposals for the exclusive development of the site into a recreational (pleasure boat-marina-restaurant-mall-shopping) area was considered. While such a plan has many attractions, the area and waterfront of the site is too large for effectively controlled recreational development. Furthermore, it would prevent establishment of a port user buffer and require a relocation of the center of community activities to provide the incentives for such development. While a partial development of the waterfront extension of Northern Avenue and C Street for recreation related activities such as pleasure boat exhibits, marinas, restaurants, and boat terminals is envisioned in the plan, if it is felt that such development must form part of a balanced and integrated development of marine(waterfront) related activities which include:

- Marine equipment manufacture
- Pleasure boat construction
- Fishing vessel repair
- Other

g) Parking Area

Consideration was given to the use of a major part of the site for parking. Although close to the city center, the site is not in walking distance nor located adjacent to large capacity rapid transit lines. The resulting traffic flow on Northern Avenue and Summer Street would be unacceptable. Extensions of route 93 and South East Expressway could possibly be led into the site, but this would still leave the imposition of shuttle service to and from the inner city.

The revenues from such an operation would fall short of attainable tax revenues from alternate balanced industrial use.

As a result of the above considerations of alternate uses of the site, a "Conceptual Development Plan" was established which offers a balanced use of the site for the purposes of economic and community revitalization of the inner city. It comprises low, medium and high intensity land use and maximizes utilization of existing facilities and equipment.

The essential elements of the Plan are:

- 1) A Ship Repair Facility for vessels of up to 180,000DWT
- 2) A Power Station Site with adjacent fueling berth.
- 3) Pleasure Boat and Marine Equipment Manufacturing
- 4) Fishing Boat and Floating Equipment Repair and Conversion (or Building) Facility
- 5) Light Manufacturing and Assembly Plants
- 6) Office and Exhibition Space (largely assigned to Port or Marine related activities)

- 7) Public Mall and Piers for pleasure, industrial or fishing vessel berthing, including an extended water-side mall, housing, restaurants, and marine equipment (or related) showrooms.
- 8) Trade Center
- 9) Free Trade Industrial Zone
- 10) Free Port Pier

Discussing the rationale for the major components of plan next:

4.1 Ship Repair and Assembly Facility

Ship Repair facilities are labor intensive and usually provide an incentive for port utilization by ships. Boston has only one major ship repair facility in East Boston (Bethlehem Steel). This facility uses two floating docks, supporting shops and piers. The maximum size of vessel which can be docked in this yard is about 20,000 tons. In fact, few repair facilities for vessels of 90,000 tons or above exist North of Norfolk, Virginia. Maryland Drydock and Sun Ship building in the Delaware both can accommodate somewhat larger vessels but concentrate mainly on conversion and construction. Ship repair facilities in New York again are limited in size to about 40,000 ton vessels. (Seatrains Shipbuilding Corp. can accommodate 180,000 DWT vessels but does not perform ship repair.)

The imminent increase of large petroleum and other bulk imports and exports, will result in a larger number of bigger ships in the trade with North Atlantic Ports. Even before deepwater (offshore) ports are established on the Atlantic seaboard will large bulk carriers and container ships enter this trade. (Using Portland, Point Tupper, etc. for shipment)

Boston is ideally situated for docking and repair of such vessels (on their ballast leg, etc.).

A preliminary analysis indicates that over 200 different vessels of sizes that cannot be accommodated in available repair facilities on the U.S. North Atlantic Seaboard will trade in the area by 1975. If as little as 20% of this market is captured, revenues of such a repair facility could amount to about \$6-10 million per year. In addition, the repair yard may attract docking and ship assembly (or conversion) jobs from area shipyards such as Bath Iron Works (no dock) or General Dynamics (Quincy). A conservative estimate of total achievable turnover is \$10-15 million. The required investment into the facility (using existing dock, cranes, buildings and piers as outlined) is estimated at \$4-6 million. The expected employment is 700-1,200 total and should be fairly level. The yard is planned on 36 acres and will consist of a 180,000 DWT dock, 4x wirley cranes, large machine shop, welding and steel fabrication shop, shipwright and outfitting shop, and various electrical, piping, carpenter and painting shops. While primarily concentrating on ship repair, it will also offer services for such jobs as:

- LNG Tanker Assembly and Outfitting
- Production of Deck houses for ships
- Assembly of Offshore Platforms and Rigs
- Ship Conversion
- Construction of Tunnel Sections
- Assembly of all sorts of waterborne equipment such as crane-barges, floating tanker or container terminals etc.

Access to the Repair Shipyard will be provided by Northern and Drydock Avenue. In addition to the dock, the shipyard will comprise berth for floating repairs varying from 400' - 1,200' in length, as shown in Fig. 3.

4.2 Marine Equipment and Pleasure Craft Industry Development

This 20 acre industrial development will comprise manufacturing and assembly plants for, among other, activities such as:

- Pleasure Craft Boat Builders
- Marina Equipment Manufacturers
- Life Saving Equipment Manufacturers
- Marine Appliance Manufacturers
- Diving and Salvage Equipment Manufacturers
- Deck and Hull Engineering Equipment Assembly
- Marine Exploration Equipment.

The three large industrial buildings comprising this development offer opportunities for industrial activity in the above fields employing about 1,200-1,800 men with a gross exceeding \$30 million.

Equipment showrooms fronting C Street would provide an attractive waterfront activity supplementing public pier and recreational facilities in attracting the public.

Similarly, public pier space will be made available to tenants of this development for floating test or exhibition of their products.

The adjacent 24 acre site to the southwest is designated as light manufacturing and offers in addition to large open

areas and smaller buildings, excellent rail and road communication. This area is planned for marine component manufacture such as used in marine equipment, pleasure boats, fishing vessels, ship building, ship repair and related marine activities. Total industrial activity here is expected to provide employment for about 800 and gross revenues of about \$32 million. The marine industrial areas are served by an extensive rail (into major buildings) and road network connected to both Northern Avenue and Summer Street.

4.3 Fishing Boat Repair Facility and Ship Repair Annex

The smaller dock and an area of about 9 acres surrounding it will be assigned to fishing vessel and miscellaneous marine equipment repair as well as a ship repair annex. This facility is an extension of the present fish pier. Pier 7 will provide an additional fish pier extension with the area at the head of Pier 7 and up to Northern Avenue developed into a fish wholesale-retail market.

4.4 Exhibition, Light Assembly and Office Facilities

The large Navy warehouse and office building (7 floors) south of Drydock Avenue will be assigned to marine related office functions at the western end, and light assembly and exhibition at the eastern end. It is expected that the small headroom of this building will attract primarily electronic, instrument and small component manufactures and assembly plants. Similarly, preference in assigning office or exhibition space should be given to shipping agents, ship chandlers,

marine sales organizations and related activities (including customs, etc.).

A specialized main access divided artery to Summer Street will serve this complex. A large parking area--3 acres--is to be located along Summer Street, west of this development.

4.5 Free Port Industrial Development

The area of about 60 acres southwest of Summer Street is planned as a free trade industrial zone served by a single free port pier at the end of the Army Base terminal in the Reserve Channel. This development will offer free trade opportunities to manufactureres with major product exports and/or material imports, as well as export/import businesses of various sorts. A secure overpass may be required to connect this development with the free port pier (unless the Treasury Dept. rules otherwise).

4.6 International Trade Center

The development plan includes conversion of the Fargo Building complex into an International Trade Center. This complex will include sales and administrative offices for the Free Trade Industrial Zone as well as corporate offices of various manufacturers using the site. An attempt will also be made to attract various international trading firms, banks and transportation companies.

5.0 Commonwealth and Fish Pier Development Opportunities

The present fish pier contains a variety of facilities with varied use and effectiveness. It appears that any attempt at revitalizing the Boston (and N.E.) fishing industry requires

at the outset the development of an effective and integrated fishing center. It is planned to include in this center:

- More extensive and accessible fish piers by including pier 7 and possibly pier 6
- Concentration of fish processing and related activities on the fish pier
- Fish restaurants along Northern Avenue
- A fish wholesale/retail market between pier 7 and Northern Avenue
- A shopping arcade on the southern side of Northern Avenue opposite the fish piers
- A fishing vessel repair facility between pier 5 and 6
- A sport fisherman pier in the basin between pier 4 and 5
- A row of specialized fishing equipment stores at the head of the sport fisherman piers.

This kind of development is expected to repeat and amplify the success of more limited developments such as in San Francisco.

6.0 Fishing Vessel Production Facility Development

There is an established need for several hundred new fishing trawlers and related craft to re-establish and maintain the New England fishing industry, presently composed largely of obsolete, and overage vessels. Recent developments abroad indicate that mass in-line production of series of standard fishing vessels may reduce delivered costs to about 60% of that of custom built vessels. Boston is an ideal location for the establishment of such a facility because of market, manpower, and facility conditions. A preliminary investigation of optimum locations for such a facility indicates the advisability of establishing it in Charlestown versus South Boston Annex. The reasons for this conclusion are:

- Available Charlestown Navy Yard Facilities (Between

pier 7 and 11) are ideally suited and reduce capital investments.

- Mass shipbuilding of fishing vessels would be incompatible with other South Annex activities
- The waterfront and road access requirements of the facility would throttle use of other land.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The conceptual Re-Use study and development plan presented in this draft report is very preliminary. No demand and economic feasibility study was performed to support the plan except for a very limited evaluation of the ship repair, fishing vessel, pleasure boat and marine equipment market. An attempt was made to develop a plan which while achieving the employment, tax revenue and economic goals, also results in a balanced development which complements the social, architectural and traditional structure of the city.

Much more detailed analysis is required to translate this conceptual Re-Use study into a meaningful and effective plan. Time is of an essence though, as the demands for this prime site are numerous. A unique opportunity for the City of Boston to develop a new life center and stimulus in the inner city is availabler here. Few cities have such once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It is hoped that this opportuntiy is not missed.

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tual re-use study, etc.

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